

# WERNETH CRICKET CLUB BAZAAR.

25 Sept. 80.

The Bazaar opened on Thursday by Mr. S. R. Platt, in the Town Hall, in connection with Werneth Cricket Club. will be long remembered as one of the most unique collections of useful and ornamental articles ever brought together under the auspices of a "fancy fair" held in this town. But soon as to the bazaar itself, a little as to the club. The Werneth Cricket Club has now attained a reputation far beyond our town borders; it is well known throughout the county as a spirited and enterprising club, which has twice invited the Australians to a friendly encounter, and often organised first-class matches with well-known home teams. In an interesting pamphlet, styled a "Catalogue and Guide to the Bazaar," edited and compiled by Mr. John Duxbury, we have some interesting particulars in connection with the early history of the club. Mr. Duxbury says that the "associations of the Werneth Cricket Club go back for a period of about 20 years, although the club has only been established 16 years." It seems that the Werneth Club was an offshoot of some clubs then in existence, such as the "Oldham Amateurs," "Werneth Britannia," and "St. John's." Mr. Duxbury continues:—"A meeting was held for the formation of the Werneth Club in the summer of 1864, under the presidency of Mr. Platt, and the members comprised the Messrs. Platt, Radcliffe, Rowland, Shiers, Clegg, and others. The number of members was but small, and for two or three seasons we had only about thirty or forty subscribers. It was, therefore, only occasionally that we engaged in matches, owing to the difficulty in getting our players together. The amount of subscription had a very deterrent effect, and prevented many from joining who would otherwise have been glad to do so, and this becoming apparent to Mr. Platt, he was one of the first to suggest a reduction, the effect of which was to induce the old 'St. John's' and 'Amateur' players to join the club in greater numbers, notably Mr. Henry Sharples, who was followed by many other good players, and then began a progress which has continued from year to year. It is a well-known fact that the Messrs. Platt, in addition to the influence afforded by their names, have been exceedingly liberal in their support of the club, but they have most judiciously left the members to contribute their quota. The benefit to the club has been that a large amount of individual effort has had to be put forth by the members, with the effect of making them more appreciative and zealous of every step that has been gained. The prize, however valuable, that is easily obtained is apt to be soon laid aside, but that which is gained by personal energy is rendered all the more dear, and is more cherished; and it is this that has constituted the principle of our success, and, as we hope, its durability. In the centre of a largely-populated town we have had to form a cricket ground and bowling green under difficulties which have at times appeared insurmountable, but there has been so great an amount of zeal permeating the officers and members of the club that, possessing the will, the way has been found, and we have now a ground and pavilion that are second to few indeed. Apart from either cricketing or bowling, we have almost an uninterrupted view of the surrounding country, and can trace the network of the mills and buildings for miles around. There is the close out herbage at our feet, the fragrance of flowers, and, if gifted with vividness of imagination, and not before entranced by the melodious chirp of coalpit wheels, we may even think we listen to the warbling of birds. Or, if it be a match day, we have excellent bands at certain intervals of the season, and a game may be witnessed which has now established itself as one of our chief national amusements, involving, as it does, the display of science with the development of physical force.

Such, in brief, is the birth, rise, and progress of the Werneth Cricket Club. But we are not so much concerned with the past history of the club as we are with its present position. It appears that there is a balance against the club of about £300—at first sight a very startling amount; but in connection with this incumbrance we must remember the magnitude of the club. With many hundred members, with an extensive and well-protected ground, and with bowling green and other accessories, one need not be astonished at a deficit which, with some kindred institutions, would simply be overwhelming. Nor need we be astonished if, with the special efforts that are now being made, and with the large number of friends which the club can, in a time of emergency such as the present, count upon, this apparently formidable liability should be easily wiped out. The bazaar under notice is the outcome of the sympathy of a large number of friends—particularly lady friends—and of appreciation of the efforts that have been put forth by the managers of the club to give to the people of Oldham an opportunity of witnessing cricket in its best form. Under an energetic ladies' committee, the undertaking soon became an assured success so far as contributions were concerned. The committee consisted of the following ladies:—Mesdames G. Little, J. Dunckerley, G. Bullivant, C. Hodgkinson, J. Mellodew, E. W. Wrigley, W. Rennie, J. Winterbottom, J. Duxbury, J. Ashton, J. Travis, D. Buckley, P. Tait, T. Dorman, Dr. Hull, J. Cassidiers, J. Rowbottom, A. Lawton, F. Whittaker, and F. Lawton. The hon. soc. was Miss Hodgkinson. The members of the club made every exertion to make the bazaar a success, and the result is, as we have stated, that as beautiful and interesting a collection of articles as could be found constituted

and they resolved to build a pavilion. This pavilion proved too small for their requirements, so they came to erect the present one. Artistically and architecturally it was one of the most complete pavilions in the county of Lancaster. In 1878, when the Australians were here, they unanimously said that a better pavilion or better ground they had not played on in England. (Hear, hear.) This required money, and a very large amount of money. At the commencement of the season they had east winds blowing for three months, so that there would be a large amount of labour during the ensuing winter. Many people would think that the club had been very lavish in their expenditure, and he dare say if they did not know the whole of the circumstances they might think they were justified in saying so. But the difficulties of the season must be remembered, and it must also be recollected that they had made the ground into such a condition that strangers coming upon it declared that a better wicket they never experienced. All this compliment gave the members a great amount of satisfaction. The present year had been a very remarkably successful one, much more so than they anticipated. They had beaten the best Manchester clubs, and beaten them twice over—such as the Loughrigg, the Broughton, the Rusholme, and the Wanderers. They had beaten these clubs well, and this they (the members of the Werneth Cricket Club) were proud of, because the clubs he had named comprised some of the best talent in Lancashire. These facts had emboldened them to come forward and ask the public to assist them in maintaining the ground in its present condition, and keeping the club in its present state of efficiency. The members now numbered 600, thus constituting it the most powerful club in England. The Marylebone Club, London, had only over 500 members. They made this appeal to the public with confidence, because they had catered to the public. They had to find money for the pavilion, which was used by the members not only as a mere cricket resort but as a social place. It contained a billiard table, and the members could be found at the pavilion almost every night. The club had a great many elderly members, for whom a bowling green had been provided. The bowling green was now well established, and he was pleased to say that they had got as fine a set of bowlers as were to be found in connection with any cricket club in this county. (Hear, hear.) He had put the case of the Werneth Cricket Club very plainly before them, and he was glad to see so many present to listen to what he had got to say for the club. The ladies had taken a great interest in this undertaking, and they had worked very hard in connection with it for the last four months. The beautiful things arranged on the stalls demonstrated the efforts that had been put forward by their lady friends. Gentlemen had only one object in view in being present—that was, to put their hands into their pockets, and buy as fast as they could. (Laughter.) With these remarks he recommended the Werneth Cricket Club to their best and kindest offices. (Cheers.)

The MAYOR said, if there was only one thing that would be gratifying to him it was to be present and take part in any proceedings in which Mr. Platt took a lively interest, because he knew that everything Mr. Platt undertook was with the strong desire and an earnest determination that it should be a success. He (the Mayor) was surprised to hear of the progress of the club, and of its great success, and that it had the largest number of members of any club in the kingdom. The fact of the club being in such a position demonstrated the Oldham character, which always made a strong endeavour to be at the front, and he was glad to hear from the history of the club that Oldham was maintaining its position in the domain of recreation. These institutions could not be kept up without means. What appeared to him to be a subject for congratulation was that they had undevoured to create within a short space of time what other institutions had taken a long time to accomplish. He trusted that whatever means were required would be realised by the bazaar. However, he had not much doubt about that, because he saw around him so many ladies taking a lively interest in the proceedings. He had great pleasure in congratulating Mr. Platt and the members of the club upon the success of the undertaking, and he expressed the wish that every success in a financial sense would be realised. (Hear, hear.)

Captain HILLIAR rose, and proposed three cheers for the ladies; and the cheers were heartily given. He then asked the members to give the "Werneth Whisper"—which meant another ringing cheer.

Mr. PLATT then declared the bazaar open.

A band was in attendance, consisting of the following performers, under the leadership of Mr. J. Wadsworth:—Mr. Taylor, first violin; Herr Leuz, second violin; Mr. J. Gagg, bass; Mr. O. Gagg, flute and piccolo; Mr. J. Wadsworth, clarionette; Mr. J. Jones, cornet; and Mr. J. Johnson, pianist.

The following is the programme for this evening:—

Glee	"Hail to the Woods"	Yarwood
Song	"The Old Mill"	Mr. D. Dunckerley
Glee	"Fair Flora Dicks"	Yarwood
Glee	"Here in Cool Grot"	Morpington
Glee	"The Good Old Times of England"	Yarwood
Glee	"Forsters Sound the Cheerful Horn"	Bishop
Song	"Strike the Lyre"	Mr. Yarwood
Glee	"All's Well"	Yarwood
Glee	"Merry Boys at Sea"	Yarwood
Glee	"Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming"	Yarwood
Glee	"Over the Hills"	Yarwood
Glee	"The Lass of Richmond Hill"	Yarwood
Glee	"Aunt Laurie"	Harmonised by Yarwood
Glee	"Merrily Our Ship"	Yarwood